

## Appendix

### An Interview with Barbara Kingsolver

The scholar had the privilege to communicate with the writer, Barbara Kingsolver over mail. The scholar had written to her, and Ms Kingsolver responded and answered the queries that the scholar raised. As a scientist and a writer-poet, Kingsolver has immense faith in ‘creation’. She feels that creation is vested with immense sacred power which can alter all anthropogenic misdeeds. She asserts: “I’m a scientist who thinks it wise to enter the doors of creation not with a lion tamer’s whip and chair, but with the reverence humankind has traditionally summoned for entering places of worship: a temple, a mosque, or a cathedral. A sacred grove, as ancient as time.” (*Insights on Creation*, Plough Quarterly, No.4). Her faith in ultimate grace and truth has given her works a singularity that is common to Rachel Carson. Like Carson, Kingsolver unites, in her literary works the scientific realities of world and poetry to convey the truth: “The aim of science is to discover and illuminate truth. And that, I take it, is the aim of literature, whether biography or history or fiction.” (Carson 1). Her words in this communication again reflect this spirit.

**AP:** Do you think that Anthropocene narratives and Climate Change fiction like *Flight Behaviour* will help us in raising our consciousness to the environmental crises?

**BK:** I think every good work of fiction has the potential to engage a reader’s mind and emotions, cultivate empathy, and broaden one’s vision beyond personal

experience. I've observed that information introduced through fiction is often absorbed in a more personal, emotional way than similar information delivered via journalism. So yes, I think fictional narratives of real-world problems can bring them more deeply into the public consciousness.

**AP:** Your fiction and non-fiction talk about traditional knowledge systems and native wisdom as a facilitator in knowing the natural world. Do you think that an 'ecological identity' is required to be self-engaged with nature / the environment?

**BK:** I'm not sure what you mean by 'an ecological identity.'

**AP:** As a biologist/scientist, you have mentioned Darwinian Biology in your novels and non-fiction. Do you see any points of intersection between Darwinian Biology and literature of the environment in your works?

**BK:** Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection is the unifying theory of biology, meaning that every trained biologist views all-natural systems through this lens. I'm a trained evolutionary biologist, so of course anything I write about natural systems will be grounded in what you call "Darwinian Biology." To call it a 'point of intersection' is incorrect. It's more like saying, "All my novels are written in English, because that is the language I speak."

**AP:** The diversity of women's voices forms the leitmotif in several of your works, including *Prodigal Summer*, *Flight Behaviour*, *Animal Dreams* and *The*

*Poisonwood Bible*. How do you think that the claims and voices articulate the perspective of The Other in the context of feminist writings?

**BK:** Not sure. For me, female voices are not The Other. They are Me, And Half The People I Know.

**AP:** *Animal Dreams, High Tide in Tucson, Small Wonder, Holding the Line* provide “hope” as a basic impulse of survival. What is your comment on the “lesson of hope?”

**BK:** I believe hope is a necessary and responsible human choice. It’s the opposite of apathy, disengagement, and giving up the ship. In current circumstances, that means letting the world go to hell for all future generations, which would be an institutionalized form of child abuse.

**AP:** *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle* represents the narrative of an independent and self-sufficient household. How do you think this book/experiment has contributed to promoting small-scale independent farmers and local food economies?

**BK:** Of course, I can’t guess. The book has been read by hundreds of thousands of people in many countries, and each reader responded in his or her own way. Maybe some of them threw the book away and drove to McDonald’s for lunch – how would I know? But I can tell you that many of those readers sent us letters detailing their excitement in finding farmer’s markets, digging up their lawns to plant gardens, or even starting their own small farming enterprises. The positive

response was overwhelming, and continues to be, ten years after the book was first published.

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